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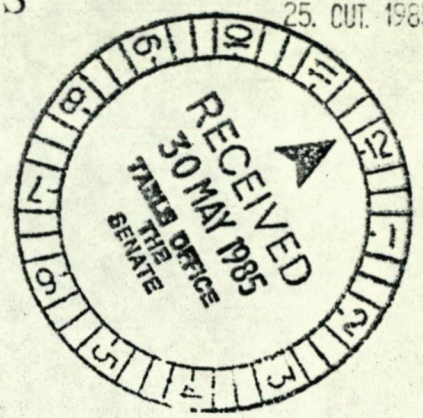

SENATE QUESTION

East Timor

(Questions No. 232 - 234)

Senator McIntosh asked the Minister representing the Minister for Foreign Affairs on 22 April 1985:

232 (1) Did the President of the International Red Cross (IRC), Mr Alexandre Hay, say during a press conference in Geneva on 10 January 1985, that:

(a) East Timor was one of the few countries where the IRC is prevented from giving relief to the victims of a military conflict; and

(b) many countries, including Indonesia, were making it impossible for the IRC to operate in accordance with Geneva Conventions governing the conduct of war.

(2) What agreements currently exist between the IRC and the Indonesian Government concerning East Timor in the areas of:

(a) monitoring, distribution and supervision of humanitarian aid requirements, by IRC personnel on mainland East Timor as well as Atauro, Oecussee and Jaco Island; and

(b) visits to detention centres (inside and outside East Timor) holding East Timorese detainees;

(3) What is the expiry date of the agreements referred to in (2) above.

(4) In which places, and on what dates, have East Timorese detainees been visited by IRC personnel since December 1982, and what number of prisoners were seen on each occasion.

(5) Do IRC personnel have free access to all East Timorese political detainees; if not, what are the current limitations on access.

233 (1) Is the Government aware of a list of 42 East Timorese, allegedly held in Cipinang Prison and Tangerang, Java, Indonesia, which was published by the British human rights organisation, Tapol, in March 1985; if so, can the Government confirm whether the East Timorese listed are or were imprisoned in Java and provide information on the reasons for their detention; if not, will the Government undertake to determine this information.

(2) Can the Government provide information on the total numbers of East Timorese being detained: (a) inside; and (b) outside East Timor, for reasons of a political or security nature; if not, will the Government seek this information.

(3) Can the Government provide information on the numbers of East Timorese: (a) tried; and (b) convicted, in (i) civil, and (ii) military courts, on charges of a political/security nature since June 1980; if not, will the Government seek this information.

(4) Is the Government aware of any observation of trials of East Timorese, charged with political/security offences, by any international legal bodies or Indonesian human rights organisations such as the Legal Aid Institute of Jakarta.

234 (1) Is the Government aware of a report in the West Australian on 2 March 1985, in which the present head of the Catholic Church in East Timor, Monsignor Belo, claimed that he saw graves holding the bodies of 84 Timorese executed by Indonesian troops, and a subsequent claim by Governor Carrascalao that "up to 10" people may have been killed in crossfire.

(2) Does the Government have, and will it provide, any more definitive information on the incident referred to in (1) above, with particular reference to the number of East Timorese killed and the circumstances of their deaths.

Senator Evans - the answers to the Honourable Senator's questions are:

232 (1)(a) At a press conference in Geneva on 10 January 1985, Mr Alexandre Hay, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross,

referred briefly to East Timor. Mr Hay said it was difficult for ICRC to visit some areas of interest to it in East Timor.

(b) At the press conference, Mr Hay referred to the Geneva Convention but these comments were not related to Indonesia.

(2)(a) The ICRC has not been involved in general relief activities on mainland East Timor since mid 1983. However, other ICRC activities in East Timor, including its program of protection visits and its relief and medical program on Atauro Island have continued without interruption. There is no specific ICRC assistance program in Oecusse or Jaco Island. The ICRC and the Indonesian authorities are in regular contact concerning ICRC activities in East Timor. In this context, the ICRC hopes to be able, in the near future, to conduct a general survey of possible humanitarian assistance requirements on mainland East Timor.

(b) There is agreement in principle between the Indonesian Government and the ICRC whereby the ICRC may visit all "GPK detainees" (Gerambalan Pengacau Keamanan - "persons arrested as a result of the events in East Timor"). This agreement covers Timorese held in places of detention in East Timor and in Jakarta.

(3) The expiry dates for the agreements referred to above are not specified.

(4) From December 1982 until the end of 1984, the ICRC made the following visits to East Timorese detainees:

Detention Centre	Dates	Numbers Visited
L.P. Dili (Comarca)	12-13.3.1984	129
	16-17.6.1984	160
	1-2.10.1984	188
L.P. Kupang	13.6.1984	14
L.P. Cipinang, Jakarta	28.6.1984	12
	12.9.1984	12
L.P. Tangerang	28.6.1984	1
	12.9.1984	1
Kodim Detention Center in Los Palos	19-29.9.1984	78

Detention Centre	Dates	Numbers Visited
Kodim Detention Center in Baucau	23-24.9.1984	29
Kodim Detention Center in Viqueque	27-28.9.1984	23

The ICRC made a further protection visit on East Timorese detainees in April-May 1985. During this visit, the ICRC visited 182 detainees in Comarca Gaol (Dili), three detainees in Becora Gaol (Dili), and 42 detainees in Cipinang Gaol (Jakarta). The Government is aware that 50 East Timorese detainees have subsequently been released from Comarca Gaol.

(5) The understandings between the Indonesian Government and the ICRC is that the ICRC should have access to all 'GPK' detainees. All visits accord with the standard ICRC requirements, including the absence of third parties during interviews. The Government understands that the ICRC is generally satisfied with the access to East Timorese detainees over the last 18 months.

233 (1) The Government is aware of the report in 'Tapol' of March 1985 which published a list of East Timorese allegedly detained in Cipinang and Tangerang prisons in Java. The Government is aware that there are at present 43 East Timorese imprisoned in Jakarta, all of whom have been tried and sentenced in East Timor. No further details about the prisoners are available.

(2) There are at present approximately 153 East Timorese being held in detention in East Timor and 43 being held outside East Timor.

(3) The Indonesian Government has stated that it intends to bring to trial all detainees. The Australian Embassy in Jakarta has been advised that, of the approximately 196 East Timorese in detention, some 143 have been tried and sentenced. There are no details available concerning the number of East Timorese tried in civilian and military courts since June 1980 on charges of a political/security nature.

(4) According to the Indonesian Government, trials and detentions in East Timor are conducted in accordance with procedures followed throughout

Indonesia. The Government is not aware of any move by an international legal body or the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute to witness or seek to witness such trials.

234 (1) The Government is aware of the report in the 'West Australian' on 2 March 1985, concerning the claims by the Apostolic Administrator in East Timor, Monsignor Belo, and of the reported claim by Governor Carrascalao about recent killings in East Timor.

(2) The Government has no information concerning these reports.